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Haliburton County's Independent Voice

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One dead, one critical in violent attack

Minden man, Ryan Kennedy pronounced dead in hospital

By Terrance Gavan

Paramedics responded late Wednesday night to a call reporting a violent attack at 1028 South Lake Road in Minden Hills.

Two victims were found bound with duct tape at the scene and rushed to hospital in Minden. Ryan Kennedy of Minden Hills was pronounced dead on arrival.

A second man was seriously injured in the attack, described by police as a violent break and enter. Police have not commented on his location or condition due to the ongoing investigation, although a source told The Highlander he had been seriously injured and was critical.

Kennedy, 21, lived with his parents in Minden and worked with his father in construction. He was a graduate of Haliburton Highlands Secondary School.

The perpetrators had fled the scene before EMS responders arrived. The OPP confirmed that there are witnesses currently being interviewed by police. Sources close to the investigation said there were two suspects in custody but police refused to confirm if that was the case. For now, the OPP is asking the public to be cautious and to notify them immediately of any suspicious activity. They do not believe there is a link between the Minden attack and two similar incidents in the Haliburton-Kawartha Lakes area during the last year.

Constable Sandy Adams of the OPP Minden Detachment said that people are going into these homes for one thing: the thing they are looking for is drugs. In April 2010, the home at 1028 South Lake Road had been the subject of a police search warrant. At that time, police found marijuana, cash and stolen property. Two men were charged with possession for the purpose of trafficking, possession of stolen property, and unauthorized possession of a weapon. There is no indication that the victims of last night's attack were related to the 2010 charges.

Heather Kennedy, Ryan's older sister and the production manager at The Highlander, said, "My brother was in the wrong place at the wrong time. He had no connection with the raid on that house in 2010, knew nothing about it. My brother was not a drug dealer."

The investigation is continuing under the direction of Detective Inspector Colleen McCormick of the OPP Criminal Investigation Branch (CIB), with the assistance of the City of Kawartha Lakes and Haliburton Highlands OPP Criminal Investigations Unit. Additional updates will be provided on The Highlander's website (www.haliburtonhighlander.ca).



Former Hal High student Ryan Kennedy died in the wake of a violent assault at a Minden residence on Wednesday evening..Another man was critically injured. /Photo - file



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County news

MNR still on the fence

Stanhope Airport property under consideration

By Jerry Grozelle

What's the latest news about the Stanhope Airport? That's a question Algonquin Highlands officials have been hearing for some time. Reeve Carol Moffatt said at Thursday's council meeting that the fate of the new runway project depends on whether a viable alternative can be found. If one can, the previous council's decision to go ahead with the new runway construction could be reversed.

It is no secret that the Ministry of Natural Resources fire headquarters is looking for a new home and that the Stanhope Airport property is on the list of possibilities.

The viable alternative, of course, has been the ongoing discussions with the MNR. There have been stories in the wind for years that the MNR might move its fire headquarters to the Stanhope Airport. "It wasn't until this council came into being that the MNR approached us and requested a formal meeting," Moffatt said.

She added that the MNR did get permission to look for alternate locations for their fire headquarters, the Stanhope Airport being the primary one for the area. Then the whole process gets handed over to Infrastructure Ontario, the agency that handles all real estate deals for the provincial government.

Moffatt and Algonquin Highlands CAO Angie Bird were two of 10 people involved in a conference call Thursday afternoon regarding the MNR Fire Headquarters. The organizations represented included Infrastructure Ontario, MNR, and various consultants.

Moffatt said the call was more of a fact-finding mission than anything else. "The purpose of the call was to ask

questions of us and our intentions so they have fodder for their ongoing discussions. They explained that this was the first time it made sense to ask questions. In fact, they had only spoken to our local MNR Rep, Dave Brown, earlier this week for his input."

Moffatt said there were a ton of questions asked. "The MNR officials will decide exactly what it is they need in terms of services. They made general enquiries about sewage disposal, hydro and water supply -- all the things that you would need if you're going to put a building somewhere," Moffatt said. "What they need will dictate the discussions going forward."

"It has already been established that six to eight acres of land will be needed for the project. We have about 100 acres of bush," Moffatt said.

The wheels of government move very slowly, but Moffatt believes the MNR is close to making a commitment. Nothing will be decided, however until it is determined that the airport site is suitable and the required services can be made available.

"It is safe to say that the CAO and I were pleased with the conversation," Moffatt said. "We're confident that we're at the negotiating table. It is very clear that they want to come to Stanhope Airport but they can't make that commitment until they know that it is going to work. They can't know it's going to work until they give us the list of what they need and we make that determination. I think there is a sincere desire to relocate there, which is good news."

If the MNR fire headquarters at the Stanhope Airport site does get the nod, it could be the alternative council has been looking for to cancel the proposed new runway. The MNR

BOO! Plan to dress up for Minden's 5th Family Halloween Dance & Party!

Getcha' vampire on folks!

On Sunday October 30, a family-friendly Halloween party is planned for the S.G. Nesbitt Community Centre in Minden.

Families, school-age children and teens will enjoy the contests, fun & games and a short dance with DJ F33DBAK. The event is slated from 7 to 9 p.m.

Minden's recreation guy Rick Cox says the evening will also "feature great decorations, prizes and maybe a 'scary' guest or two."

Local celebrity spinner, DJ F33DBAK will be mixing tunes live. The Highlands will be bouncing to the groove," says Cox. "Highland Media Arts will be there so folks can be filmed against a blue screen and dubbed into old horror movie scenes for viewing on the big screen.

"The event is intended to be a fun night out for families and youth, so parents -- please come along."

Cox says that additional donations of prizes and decorations, "would be gratefully accepted."

Sponsors include MOOSE-FM, the Minden Lions Club, Highland Media Arts, Autumn Marketing, Lynda Litwin at RE/Max and the Township of Minden Hills.

Here's the catch.

"You must be in costume to get in, and the cost for admission is \$2," says Cox.

Prizes will be awarded in various age groups for the best costume, the best 'family costume', and other categories.

For more information contact Rick Cox, Director of Community Services, at 705-286-1936 ext. 221.

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County news

Children's Aid strike continues – no talks set



From left: Jennifer Hill, Sandra Trumbull, Shannon Sawa, Holly Matthews, Sandra Woods and Tsa Alexander

By Stephen Patrick

The Kawartha – Haliburton Children's Aid Society front line workers appear to be heading into their second week on the picket lines. "We have not been invited back to the table by management as yet," OPSEU Local 334 President, Jennifer Smith told the Highlander. "And we're not unreasonable people: in fact if anything, we're a pretty laid back bunch. This is the first strike in our history, and we've been trying over the past three years to resolve a number of issues relating to work load, primarily."

Children's Aid Executive Director Hugh Nicholson admits that there were some issues surrounding staffing and case loads, particularly last summer: "Some of these issues have come up really suddenly, and it's hard to understand some of it," Nicholson told the Highlander.

"Case loads over the past two years have been low, but yes, over the past year it has increased. The ongoing cases rose quickly, and we weren't able to get more staff on board quickly enough. We managed to get more staff by August, but the summer is a very difficult time for Children's Aids, certainly."

"People are on holiday, staff tensions run high, and staff can feel overwhelmed."

OPSEU Local 334 represents about 130 employees, including front-line social workers, child protection workers, and accountants. "One hundred of our members showed up for the strike vote, and 94 percent said yes," said Smith. "And I can tell you, this is what happens when people collectively reach their limit, when they can't spend time with their families at night, or have a weekend off. But quite frankly

the workplace environment has become truly oppressive, and you know what? We'd rather be outside without pay than inside those four walls."

Another sore spot for the workers is the fact that this Children's Aid is one of only two in the province that has run a surplus over the last three years. That's the time period that Hugh Nicholson has been the ED. "We have managed to move a number of kids out of care and into permanent families, which we think is a good thing," said Nicholson. "And that's been financially beneficial to us. We want eventually to get those monies over to case services. Somehow the staff are believing that we're moving resources away from child protection services, but it's just the opposite. And we do want the workers back as soon as possible."

Little points out that some of the surplus has gone to buy two Toyota Prius Hybrids, and a new Honda generator, for example, and a new kitchen. "I do think some of that money could have been allocated better," Nicholson counters that, "those monies have not been on the workers' backs, I can assure you."

For negotiations to resume, Nicholson insists that, "The field must be narrowed down to the essential issues, so we can have a chance of resolving them face to face." For her part, Little just wants to negotiate – and insists that some recognition of the "oppressive" nature of the workplace must be recognized.

There Kawartha-Haliburton Children's Aid society has almost 500 ongoing cases, and about 250 children in care. There are about 32 managers, of whom about 20 are actively trying to shoulder the case load.

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Editorial opinion



A puzzling decision

By Stephen Patrick

Dysart Council last week decided not to include the Arts Council's Event Calendar with this year's tax bills. This would have been the fourth year for the calendar's inclusion. For the first two years, all four Haliburton municipalities included it: last year Highlands East declined, although it gave no specific

reason for doing so.

In all, each year approximately 30,000 copies were mailed out, and according to Arts Council coordinator Donna Pugh, it was regarded as a great way to communicate with its stakeholders, particularly perhaps with seasonal residents. It was also a useful fund raiser, thanks to the local advertisers. Pugh now hopes that Minden Hills and Algonquin Highlands will continue to support it when the decision is reviewed, likely in the next month or so.

There are very few business people or municipal politicians who don't accept that the Haliburton County arts scene is one of our essential economic strengths. Whether or not one agrees that the so-called "Creative Economy" is a sure-fire route to a prosperous future for this county (and there are those on all sides of the political and ideological spectrum who don't), there can be no doubt that our galleries, studios, and of course the local Fleming College are major attractions. Just last week our defeated MPP Rick Johnson was emphasizing just how important that community was to the wider world, and of how so many of his colleagues at Queen's Park are so envious of it.

So why not help out the Arts Council (a non-profit agency with connections to all the major arts groups) to communicate arts and community events to the taxpayers? Just because one business person was ticked that he hadn't been approached to advertise, while a competitor (and Arts Council member) had? The calendar's been out for three years running, which is surely enough time for other advertisers to step up if they had wished to. And does council really believe that by supporting a calendar produced by a non-profit group it is de facto supporting those who chose to advertise in said calendar? Such sensitive souls, to be sure. Heaven forbid that council should sully its lily-white hands with the vague stench of commerce.

Or perhaps there's another agenda at work at Dysart. The calendar insert was the brain-child of former councilor (and defeated deputy-reeve candidate Janis Parker), a passionate supporter of the local art scene. Ms. Parker had to fight hard and long three years ago to have the calendar included. And it was no secret that some on council thought that Ms. Parker's ideas and political methods were, perhaps, a trifle aggressive. So did this decision have anything to do with good old-fashioned political payback? In any event, one thing's clear: the unequivocal support for the arts that Parker brought to council is not going to be replaced any time soon.

Tell us your Opinion
send your letters to the editor to
letters@haliburtonhighlander.ca

What does the Occupy move-

By Bram Lebo, Publisher



The Highlander had over 30 applications for the position of office manager. As we went through them and conducted interviews, it became apparent to us that nearly all of them were qualified. Very qualified, in fact.

But we could only take one, and we wonder, what of the other 29 and their efforts to earn a living?

Something has gone horribly wrong in our society. The greatest achievement of the 20th century was the creation of a strong middle class through a relatively modest package of economic policies that built a sense of well-being and security for millions of people. Without those policies that emerging middle class would have remained, in essence, indentured peasants. Those same policies gave millions the ability to raise a family on a single, decent income: public education; healthcare; and freedom from the fear of destitution and neglect, especially in old age. It's enough for most people and has contributed to our growth as a stable, healthy society.

But sometime around 1980, many of the wealthy and powerful around the world decided that freedom meant something else: the ability to make as much money as possible, regardless of the effects on society.

Their position was made easier by corporate ownership structures. Whereas in years past, a bank owner would have to face his customers in town or in church, today that owner is likely to be a faceless corporation located in London, Dubai, or Bermuda. There are no more customers ó only consumers; no employees ó just workers.

Why not outsource jobs overseas to maximize profits? Let citizens compete for jobs with ever-lower wages, first in the real world and now online? It's more efficient, isn't it? But since when does efficiency trump wellbeing?

We are now witnessing a replay of The Grapes of Wrath in real time. This newspaper, for example, could if it wanted hire writers in India at a dollar an article, or less. They

might not have quite our take on the Minden Hills Council, for example, but we sure could fill the space.

This of course was the situation a century ago, and workers fought back by demanding collective bargaining, better wages and conditions, and protection from overseas labour competition. They knew that free movement of capital worked just fine for the wealthy, who could move production to lower-wage countries. But it did nothing for the workers, who had no option to move, or to seek work elsewhere.

But almost by stealth, the economic system that produced the greatest prosperity in history has been taken apart, leaving 30 workers to compete for one job. It was achieved by slowly merging business, wealth and politics, particularly in the US.

There is nothing natural about a free-market economy. Even if you believe in God, you must admit that He has nothing to do with supply and demand, inflation and wages. These are the domain of humanity, and if the economy is not working for the rest of us, it's time to change it. That's what the protesters are saying. They note that the happiest people in the world are also the highest-taxed. There is, alas, nothing rotten in the state of Denmark.

At least we are better off in Canada than they are in the US, where bankers have quite literally committed fraud, gambling depositor money in a giant Ponzi scheme underwritten by American taxpayers. But we are heading in that direction, into a two-tier world of privilege for the rich and anxiety for the rest. Indeed while many struggle to fill up their cars, our elected ministers fly private jets at our expense: one of Canada's greatest companies and strongest employers is on the rocks, quite possibly in part due to one of its owner's obsession with buying a hockey team, taking his eye off the puck as technological advances overtook his company.

US senate-candidate Elizabeth Warren said

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Letters to the editor

Help spread the message of peace

Dear Editor:

Welcome back Stephen! Bob and I certainly missed your editorials ... we also welcome The Highlander, an independent newspaper that covers all of Haliburton County!

Stephen, this week is Week without Violence, October 17th to October 23rd. I know this is short notice but I was hoping you could spread the message of peace and non-violence. The main purpose of the Week without Violence is to eradicate violence from homes, schools, work places and neighbourhoods. The YWCA states "One week without violence" Can you imagine a Lifetime?

I am not aware of any events taking place in Haliburton

County this week to recognize the Week without Violence. There are numerous events taking place in Peterborough and surrounding areas. I am disappointed that the YWCA, Haliburton County has not planned any events to raise awareness for the Week without Violence.

I do appreciate any coverage the Highlander can give to bring awareness to the Week without Violence.

Thank-you for your past support. It is good to have you back we're looking forward to many editions of the Highlander!

Donna McKay
Maple Lake

"Welcome Back to an 'independent' newspaper!"

Dear Editor (& everyone else)

How wonderful that you are continuing to produce "an independent" paper for all of us. Most importantly, your paper continues to be for all Highlanders. Being interested/informed/caring in what is happening beyond one's own little village/hamlet can only be helpful for the betterment of the Highlands.

We would like to consider the "goals" of your paper as "worth as much or more" than a subscription to the other papers. Therefore we would like to "donate" by ordering a subscription (which is currently \$42 to other local papers). We think that a free paper is great, and we challenge others who want to still have an independent paper a year from now to "donate". The "leanness" of your current publication can only get "more substantial with support."

Personally, we hope that THE Highlander (great name) will go back to the roots of The Voice because frankly in the end we didn't even pick it up and read it because it seemed to be more "drivel" than locally informative.

Several times we wondered where Stephen Patrick had gone because we felt the paper had gone down hill considerably without him. We have hope that The Highlander can become the paper that serves all of the Highlands well.

Best wishes.
Bernie Davis
Minden,
Haliburton Highlands, ON

"Gelertians is inclusive..."

Dear Editor, Dear Outsider,

Love the new look of your column photo. Very rugged and season appropriate. I also enjoyed your philosophical take on that most basic of chores ... stacking firewood.

On the topic of nomenclature for residents of our various districts I thought I would offer up the following ... I live on the outskirts of Gelert (second beaver swamp to the right of downtown Gelert proper) and many of us in this area refer to ourselves as Gelertians. Your terminology of "bloke from Gelert" is not wrong but it leaves out the gals from Gelert.

Gelertians is inclusive, while at the same time alluding to our other-worldly nature (of which we are very proud).

There is quite a creative cluster of artists, musicians, and writers in this area ... perhaps it is pure chance ... or perhaps it is the magnetic attraction of Gelert. Or maybe we just spend a lot of time stacking wood and need an outlet for all those ideas we think up while doing so.

In any case, thank you for your provocative prose and it is excellent news (no pun intended) that you guys are up and running again.

Sincerely,
Mary Anne Barkhouse
Friends of Fine Cheeses, Gelert Chapter

Why left must unite in marriage of convenience

by Jack Brezina

Some might think it is too late. Others might deride the suggestion as a copy-cat move that demonstrates a lack of imagination. Still others may dismiss the idea outright because they perceive it as being impossible.

I refer to a suggestion that has been around for a while, but quickly dismissed for any of the reasons above or more. It is time to bring those on the left of the political spectrum together under one banner. There are a number of reasons why such a move makes sense and should be acted on as quickly as possible.

First, the recent Ontario election is about to force a coalition of the left. With Dalton McGuinty's Liberals in a minority position and the New Democrats holding the balance of power, you can bet that some kind of formal or informal agreement is already in the works to ensure there is a reasonably stable government in Ontario for the next few years at least. While McGuinty could find the votes he needs by playing nice with the Conservatives, both Hudak and McGuinty would find such an alignment distasteful and likely unacceptable to their respective supporters, especially the dyed in the wool Tories who would revolt against any leader who became too cozy with the Liberals.

So the only option and the one that would be the easiest to forge and sell to their respective supporters, will be the one that brings the Liberals and NDP together. It has happened in Ontario in the past when the Peterson government found itself short of a majority and signed a pact with the Bob Rae New Democrats. The union proved to be very productive and beneficial for the province. Dalton McGuinty and Andrea Horvath, if they haven't already, will be exploring common ground in the next few weeks.

While this could be viewed as a shotgun wedding, and a temporary fix to get the province through some choppy waters, this marriage of necessity could provide the basis for a permanent union, creating a party that represents the interests of those from the centre and left. It would help to clarify the options open to provincial voters. By more clearly defining the players on the political spectrum, an amalgamated party of the centre-left could also stimulate increased interest on the part of the electorate, which is refusing to become engaged in the process in ever-increasing numbers.



Likewise at the federal level, it is time for the two centre and left parties to get out from under the vote splitting that beggars both their houses. Perhaps the over-all results of the May federal election might not have changed with a single party to the left. The Conservatives would still hold a majority with 166 seats, but they would face a more formidable opposition with the combination of the NDP and Liberal numbers at 136. But who knows what the outcome might have been if a centre-left party had been led by the likes of Jack Layton. Like the province of Ontario, it would offer a clearer choice to voters if there were just two main parties offering visions of the right and left.

It was fractious vote splitting to the right on which the Liberals built their dominance of federal politics. They were only too happy to see the internal wranglings of the conservatives and the emergence of the splinter groups from the west ... Reform, Alliance and Conservatives. It was this internal sniping that allowed the Liberals to claim majority after majority and be given the pompous title of "the natural ruling party of Canada".

Their undoing, over and above a massive dose of arrogance, can also be found in the efforts of Stephen Harper to unite the right. It was a long and politically dirty road ... just ask the many Progressive Conservatives of 15 or 20 years ago who were tossed aside as so much unwanted chaff in the single-minded quest to bring the right together ... but it has paid big dividends and promises to dominate the federal political scene for years to come as the centre and left divides its energy and votes between the NDP, the Liberals and to a certain extent the Green Party.

It won't be an easy task to convince the stalwarts of either party that their best chance to affect change is to combine forces. It won't happen overnight either. Just look how long it took for Stephen Harper to bring the many right wing voices into a single tent. But it will be both necessary and a service to the future of the country and this province. To miss this opportunity further dooms both parties, and those who see life from the centre left perspective, to being further marginalized and frozen out of a meaningful participation in the future of this country.

Dysart et al

Road works start and the debate begins

By Will Jones

"We are doing the best we can to work with the retailers on the main street. We appreciate that it's tough to make a living here and we are trying to minimise impact to business during the works."

Brian Nicholson is director of public works in the municipality of Dysart et al but he may feel like the marketing and communications guy at the moment. The renovations to Highland Street have long been forecast and often discussed by local businesses and the community as a whole. But, with the arrival of guys in high-viz jackets, excavators and 'construction works ahead' signs, work has well and truly started and the time for debate is over. Or is it?

"They should have gone with the Band Aid approach; rip it off and get it over with," thinks Janet Sheehy, of JanKnits Studio. "To drag the work out for as long as they are doing seems like they are prolonging it for no reason."

Conversely, Andy Glecoff, owner of V&S Department Store, says: "The scheduling is good. We couldn't have had it going on during the high season and so we really appreciate that the council understands that and is working to accommodate us."

The contractors moved into Highland Street just over a week ago and first phase of street improvement works are scheduled to continue until the winter freeze-up. "The utilities [Hydro One, Bell Alliance and EastLink Cable TV] will be putting their infrastructure into the ground this fall," says Nicholson. This includes the installation of concrete transformer pads and pipe work for cables; tunnels under the road; and, secondary cabling to the front of the premises.

"In the spring, Hydro One and Bell will pull cables and connect them: then, the poles will come down," explains Nicholson. "The municipality will also be carrying out work on the storm and sanitary sewers along the street."

Fall of 2012 will see the most significant visual work commence, with the sidewalks, curbs and road being torn up and renewed. "If all goes to plan, there'll just be some finishing off to do in the spring of 2013," says Nicholson.

What seems like mere cosmetics to some is valued by others as an improvement scheme that will help attract more visitors and potential new residents. Costing almost \$1.7 million, the streetscape improvements will include burying the web of unsightly utilities and electrical cabling that is currently strung across the street on poles; resurfacing the road, creating new crossing points, which will include new pedestrian and vehicle lighting; improving the drainage; laying new curbs; and, paving the sidewalks with interlocking brick sets.

"I support the work," says Karen Frybort, general manager of McKecks Bar. "In the short term I'm sure there'll be challenges but if we don't overcome these and aim to get better then we'll never achieve our full potential. The better the village looks, the more people it will attract and the more people it attracts the more prosperous it will be."

However, for all of Frybort's optimism, Nicholson has his hands full convincing some businesses that the upheaval caused by the road works will be worth it.

Cate Meunzel, sales representative at Bernsteins, thinks the work will affect business: "We'll definitely lose customers if they can't park on the main street during the work, or if they find it difficult to walk down the street. Elderly people need to be able to park right on the street and if they can't get about easily they'll go elsewhere."

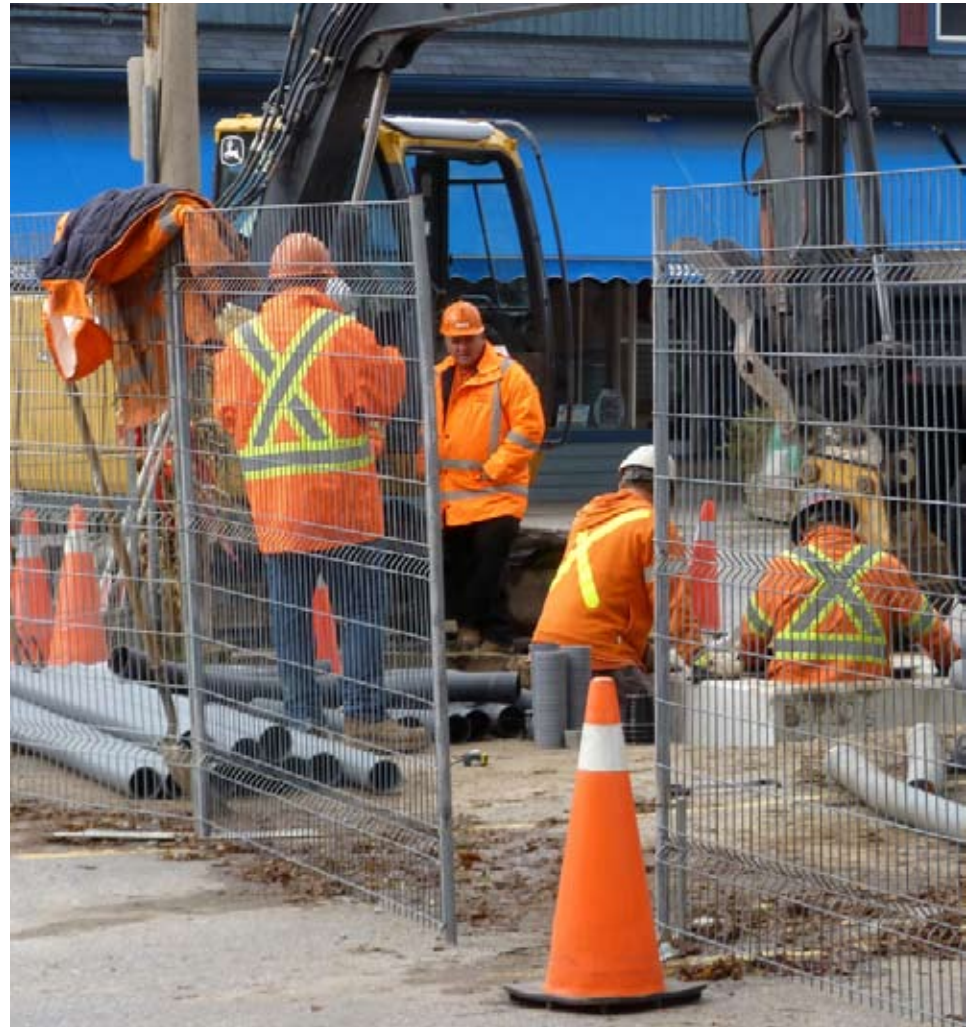
To these concerns, Nicholson explains that he and the council have been busy behind the scenes attempting to ensure that

all aspects of the work are carried out with as little disruption to business owners and the public as possible. "I've had five meetings just recently in which I negotiated with the utilities and

their preferred contractors to ensure that they synchronise their work in order that the disruption is kept to an absolute minimum," he says.

"To complete the street renewal works we have to dig in front of all of the stores on the main street. I'm sorry if retailers think this is inconvenient but I hope they understand that we are doing our utmost to minimise the impact that we have on their business."

And here is the crux of most retailers' concerns, the impact upon business. While both Meunzel and Sheehy are pessimistic about the impact of the road works – Sheehy



Contractors start work on Haliburton's Highland Street

also citing them as a potential final nail in the coffin for some struggling businesses – one retailer has been through this type of street improvement work before and he sees no reason to be worried.

Jeff Strano, operations manager at AO Boatwerks, worked at a store in Peterborough during a similar streetscape improvement project. "The store owner panicked and made all kinds of arrangements to provide alternate entrances around the back of the store but in the end he needn't have worried, the works had little impact upon sales."

Strano continues: "The plan for the works looks logical and I don't see anyone coming up with anything better. Work is being carried out in the low season; when else would be a better time to do it? And, the street will look great when everything is complete, look at York Street for proof: that can only impact positively on business on Highland Street."

Similarly, fellow retailer Ruth Robinson, owner of Cranberry Cottage, thinks that there is no better alternative to the schedule of work put in place by the council and contractors; although, she is more cautious about how it will play out.

"I am a little worried about how it will affect business, especially as things slow down considerably in the low season," says Robinson, "but the scheduling is sensible and the council has worked well with us business

owners to ensure that we are kept abreast of what's going to happen and when."

The Photo Shop owner and chair of the Haliburton BIA, Luke Schell, is more bullish in his optimism: "I think the impact will be minimal. If folks need to come into town to shop I don't think they are going to change their minds because of a few holes in the road. And, just think about the street when the project is complete. Even if the renewed streetscape doesn't translate directly into more sales, Highland Street, our street, will look so much better when the work is done."

Frybort agrees: "Haliburton is a beautiful little village and it can only be made better by work like this."

And so, overall it seems Nicholson, the council and the contractors have

got the support of the businesses on Highland Street, for now. The director of public works is making a real go of his career in public relations and the store owners appreciate the work going into keeping them informed, and, in trying to minimise the impact upon their sales.

"To anyone who is in doubt about the reasoning behind this work, I say take a look at York Street," says Nicholson. "Compare how it looks now with what it was two years ago and think ahead to the summer of 2013. Haliburton will look great to you and to visitors, too."

"To drag the work out for as long as they are seems like they are prolonging it for no reason."

Janet Sheehy,
JanKnits Studio



"The plan for the works looks logical and I don't see anyone coming up with anything better."

Jeff Strano,
Boatwerks



Highlands east

Delays dog Tory Hill EMS base

By Jerry Grozelle

Following is a summary of discussions at the Emergency Medical Services Committee meeting at the Haliburton County building in Minden on October 12.

Tory Hill base

Haliburton County Director of Emergency Medical Services Pat Kennedy updated the EMS Committee on the Tory Hill base.

"We've been through numerous renditions of this building, as you know," Kennedy said. Progress in the conversion of the building to an ambulance base has been delayed by a number of problems, but a final engineer's draft will be submitted within a matter of days.

Kennedy showed the committee a copy of the blueprint and highlighted some of the features. He said that confirmation from the Ministry of Health that they could go ahead with a unisex washroom has simplified the design. “It made a big difference as far as the space we needed in the building,” he said. “We have two change rooms, each with showers in them, as well as the unisex washroom.”

He showed the floor plan, saying: "I think it's going to work out pretty good."

The tender for construction and renovations should be ready by the end of this week and he said he hoped a special meeting of county council could be called to approve the tenders to expedite the start of construction.

Kennedy noted that delays in getting the base operational are adding to the EMS budget in terms of vehicle use (mileage and maintenance) and meal claims for paramedics, who have to cover eastern portion of the county from the Haliburton base.

When the Tory Hill base is operational, two paramedics will be deployed there from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. "They will start their day there rather than in Haliburton," Kennedy said.

Call volume

Kennedy said that call volumes are up across the county, with more overtime for paramedics, more mileage and more out-of-area

transfers. "It appears as though we are quite busy," Kennedy said, noting that there have been 400 transfers out of the county to date this year, which is up from last year.

Kennedy's numbers don't match those of the Ministry of Health, which indicate that call volumes are stable. He said he is not confident that the ministry's statistics are a true reflection of what's really happening in Haliburton County.

Budget shortfall

This year has been a frustrating one for Kennedy. The funding from the provincial government was considerably less than anticipated, leaving him and County Treasurer Laura Janke struggling to find the necessary funds to operate the service.

In addition to the provincial grant shortfall, the cost of fuel has increased well beyond the budget estimate. Repairs to the doors at the Haliburton base and to the floor of the Minden base have added another \$10,000 worth of unbudgeted cost. On a positive note, Kennedy said there have been no major vehicle repairs needed.

Contract negotiations will go to arbitration in December of 2012 and the settlement will be retroactive to January of 2011. Those costs will be reflected in future EMS budgets.

Kennedy noted that the EMS has been under budget for the past four years, but with the accumulation of circumstances beyond his control, a deficit situation is possible for 2011, although he said he hasn't given up hope yet for a balanced budget this year.

"The shortfall in [provincial] funding has hit us very hard," Janke said.

PAD Program

The Public Access Defibrillators Program, whereby defibrillators have been made available at a number of locations across the county, has proven to be a success. Kennedy noted that about 1,000 people have been trained to use the defibrillators and the training will continue.

"We're victims of our own success," Kennedy said. "We have an excellent Public Access Defibrillator Program."

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Around the county

Breathing Easy with Yoga in the Highlands

by George Farrell

Gail Holness is a Yoga instructor who surely has a most appropriate name, considering her profession. More than that however, Gail Holness brings knowledge to her chosen field born out of a past that saw her suffer from mental stress and stress-related physical conditions. So she knows from personal experience what many people who come to her have gone through, or are going through.

In 1990 she was involved in a car accident which injured both of her legs. "It was a major turning point in my life," she said. "I received some insurance monies and I decided I wanted to do something different." Eventually she went into business with her dad in "a little Deli in an industrial area of Toronto," which did well for six years. Then she and her sister Jennifer opened up another Deli-style restaurant called The Lunchbag. The sisters operated that business for seven years.

Gail met Mike Holness in 1997 after he'd come home from Korea to spend time with his father who was very ill. Mike's parents lived in Bolton Ontario, right across the street from where Gail was living. Both Gail and Mike were in crisis during that time, and they sought solace in one another.

"Mike used to come up to the Highlands to cottage on Lake Salerno when he was a boy," Gail revealed. "His dream was to live up here. He moved up when he started teaching at Archie Stouffer School in 2000."

In 2002 Mike and Gail were married. "We got married at Richie Falls," she said. "Lyn Winans was the photographer. She was teaching at Archie Stouffer at the time and she kind of took Mike under her wing."

Gail moved up permanently in 2003 after selling The Lunchbag. Mike and Gail purchased property on Koshlong Lake road, and the couple slowly set about building their dream home.

Gail, who'd always had an entrepreneurial spirit, knew what she wanted to do in the Highlands. She'd gotten into Yoga in the mid '90's in Toronto as a way of relieving her stress, and during that period she'd obtained a certificate to teach.

"Yoga changed the direction of my life," Holness stated. "I was always tense due to stress, and I had back problems. I was in a lot of discomfort, and even though I was always physically active I had to stop going to workouts. Physio didn't do it for me, and I realized that I needed Yoga not just for flexibility but for the mind. I had

to learn how to relax because I was always worrying. If there was something to worry about I'd find it."

"Through Yoga I eventually found an inner peace," Holness continued, "and I learned that through the postures in Yoga you could get to the mind because through the postures you become very focused on what you're doing and eventually you become able to cut out the 'screaming monkey' of the mind. Our state of mind affects our physical state; I firmly believe that."

In the fall of 2003 Gail Holness started teaching Yoga to the staff at Archie Stouffer, but she realized that she wanted a more complete foundation in Yoga to bring to her classes.

"I wanted to learn from where Yoga started," she said. So she enrolled at an old established Yoga centre in Neyyar Dam in the south western tip of India. It was an intense six weeks course.

"In India there was more emphasis on the spiritual aspects of Yoga," Holness declared, "which was very new to me." There was a concentration on a vegetarian diet, which Holness embraced. She's now a vegetarian.

"It was all so new and a bit overwhelming," she said. "Being there meant that you had to let go of a lot of stuff like getting in touch with people on the outside, which is what they wanted."

"There were people there from every corner of the world; over 200 of us. We'd be up at 5:30 every morning and we'd meet at the temple for meditation. At 6:30 there was a tea break, then 2 hours of breathing exercises and Yoga classes, and finally breakfast which consisted of watery rice, nan bread and a few veggies. It took some getting used to. It was both spiritual and regimented but it meant that you didn't have to think or make choices, and what it taught me was to trust in myself and to realize that things would always be the way they were supposed to be and that I didn't need to concern myself with trying to control the outcome. It was a letting go and a trusting in myself."

Gail Holness started teaching Yoga in Haliburton village in 2004, and



Gail Holness moved to Haliburton County permanently in 2003

Little Theater and Hal High get their acts together

By Terrance Gavan

A May-November romance – or bromance – is a longstanding hook in the theater.

Apropos of that snuggle with trouble the Highlands Little Theatre (November) will be joining with the Haliburton High School Drama Department (May), producing an evening of one act plays on **Friday Oct. 28 and Saturday Oct 29**. Performances begin at 7:30 each evening.

Jack Brezina, our local angel, reports that plans for the evening are proceeding apace and for those of us who are already feeling the pangs of our local theatrical migration this sounds like the right cure for the theatrical souls in the Highlands.

Tickets are available at Cranberry Cottage in Haliburton, Pharmasave in Minden or from Brezina himself. Tickets are \$15.00.

Brezina says, "Highlands Little Theatre will be presenting Gosforth's Fete, a farce by Alan Ayckbourn while the student from the high school have a great comedy, Superhero Sanitarium by Scott Haan."

to attend this evening of live theatre, they can get tickets from Elke Zilla at the High School for only \$7.50," Brezina says. "Please come out and support our young actors as well as your fellow thespians."



Brezina adds that HLT will be taking the play on to the EODL (Eastern Ontario Drama League) One Act Festival in Perth on Saturday November 12.

Let Brezina know if you would like to join the caravan and support the Highlands at the competition.

Starting in Gosforth's Fete are: Peter Forgrave, Shawn Hagerman, Louis McIntyre, Debra Dart and Kimberly Veneziale.

Superhero Sanitarium features: Keith Burley, Sylvia Jennings, Kelsey Kletke, George Charlebois, Liz Toth and Mike Mazara.

Hey Haliburton, let's get in on this gig. And The Highlander is looking forward to seeing you all at the Northern Lights Performing Arts PavilPavilion later this month.

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Senior Highlanders

Aging Well

by Penny Brown



Aging well is a vision we all share and the lucky ones among us were born with good genes, which makes that vision easier to achieve. Those are the lucky ones who seem to sail through the years with only some wrinkles and white hair to show for it.

We've all seen the amazing great granny who is the star of the yoga class, or the elderly gent who still enjoys a half mile swim in almost any weather. They are the lucky ones indeed. They may be a little slower than they once were, or perhaps a bit more stubborn than in their youth, but they haven't lost their enthusiasm for exercise or their talent for enjoying life to the max.

Others aren't so lucky and may have endured a debilitating illness or incident at some point in their later years. Still, with a good attitude and some real-life tips on how to manage well, we can all enjoy our senior years.

This week I received a letter from Wilma whose husband is in the second category and has a physical obstacle to overcome. To Wilma I say thank you for your letter and your honesty. Here it is, with my answer.

Dear Penny

My husband used to be an active man with an outside job most of his life and he used to like to help me in the kitchen when he came home and saw me cooking. Now, however, he has had a stroke and his left hand is useless and he shuffles and his balance isn't very good so he doesn't like to walk and never comes in the kitchen any more. He can't even peel a potato. He sits on the couch all day and watches television and even eats there and gets less interested in life every day. I don't know what to do and it's driving me crazy. Can you suggest anything?

Worried Wilma

Dear Wilma,

No matter how big or small it was, a stroke is a life-altering event that affects everyone involved—including the person who experienced it and the spouse of that person too. I can understand how difficult it must be for you to see your husband lose interest in life and feel powerless to help. So let's start with peeling a potato.

There is a device that's very simple to make and allows a one-handed person to peel a potato—or anything else. All you need is a cutting board or small slab of inch thick wood. Turn the slab upside down and in the centre, hammer 3 nails all the way through, about 1 inch apart in the shape of a small triangle. When you turn the board right side up, you'll have three sharp prongs sticking straight up. That's what's going to hold the potato.

Since your husband's balance is poor, help him into the kitchen and seat him at the kitchen table. Give him a potato peeler and some potatoes. Show him how to stick a potato on the nails and let him get to work.

I'd like to add a note of caution here. A stroke often causes a weakness or paralysis in a limb and frequently causes difficulty with balance. It's important to know that sometimes, a stroke may also interfere with a person's ability to do things in sequence, which causes confusion and frustration. Be aware of that possibility and if needed, gently offer some help.

Be sure to stay cheery and positive because you want this to be the first of many activities that help your husband feel better about himself and life so the two of you can continue to enjoy some of the things you used to do together.

Let me know how it goes and if you like, I'll be happy to suggest some other one-handed kitchen activities.

If anyone else has a question or concern, please drop me a note. Send it to editor@haliburtonhighlands.ca. I look forward to hearing from you.

The Outsider

Autumnal invaders

By Will Jones

When I first saw them I didn't take a lot of notice. Just one or two scattered here and there around the county. Funny, I thought, and that was about it.

But then more started to appear. Gradually they were spreading, popping up like some form of disease, a seasonal rash, may be. Some were big, some small. They appeared alone, in lines, even clusters and piles.

I began to get a little concerned when early one Sunday morning I saw one lying in the middle of Highland Street, split open, like some huge deformed egg from which a grotesque being had hatched and skittered off into the shadows, leaving a trail of seeds.

I pointed it out to my companion. I didn't elucidate my full blown theory about little orange men for fear that my Canadian buddy would think me crazy. I simply exclaimed: "Whoa! Look at that, there, Jeess," in a high pitched uncontrolled shriek but he brushed it off, stating, "kids, eh. Who'd have 'em."

Kids... I shivered. Surely they come from the same place as the ones in the UK!

And then, a few days later, I stumbled upon the epicentre of the outbreak; the Area 51 of Haliburton's alien invasion; the place where no one in their right mind should be going anywhere near. But there was no high fence, no federal agents cordoning the area off.

I was in Buckhorn, that pleasant little village on the way to Peterborough; the place the

aliens had undoubtedly aimed to conquer first. And, amidst the rolling fields on this beautiful fall day there was a long line of smiling families waiting their turn to pay money to enter, to ride on a tractor to go see where this bizarre phenomenon was spreading from.

Now, I'm sure you've all seen those films where the hero (not that I'm casting myself as some death defying, world saving chap by any means) is at first dead set on staying as far away from the action as possible but somehow he just can't help but wander right into the heart of the lions den. Well, that was how it was with me.

I stopped the car a way off down the road (there was a large queue), and, taking Little Z as back-up/a disguise/human shield I followed the crowd of smiling folk.

They gladly paid their dues and loaded themselves onto tractor trailers. They grinned and chattered as we were pulled slowly away from civilization and out into the uninhabited countryside. Past fields of strawberries, tomatoes, raspberries and corn we went.

The corn definitely worried me. I've seen corn in too many horror films.

And then, there it was, the source of my angst. A vast field filled with thousands of them. Big ones and small; smooth, ribbed and knobbly. There were white ones, green and grey but mostly they were the same as the ones spreading throughout Haliburton. Orange!

The tractor stopped and the kids piled off it, running out into this field of doom. I screamed at them to stop but was drowned out by another tractor as it approached with another trailer load of smiling faces. I began to realise it

was too late and slumped down on the steps of the trailer. I clutched weakly at Little Z as he struggled to get free and I wept as he broke from my grasp, ran into the field and threw his arms around the largest orange orb that he could find.

The wife looked at me like I was an alien and skipped over to our little boy.

I'd lost them, it seemed.

Suddenly a large hand pressed my shoulder. I looked up into the big brown eyes of the Mexican tractor driver. He understood, I could see.

"What? Why?" I bleated.

"I know," he said. "Crazy, crazy people. They worship them! They pay money to come in; they pay money to take them home, and then, they build shrines. They stack them in the street, line their driveways, set them on the porch with candles in!

"In Mexico we just eat pumpkins."



Junior highlanders

Hal High's Lewis puts up some

by Terrance Gavan

"The difference between a 300 hitter and a 250 hitter is one hit every two weeks." Baseball statistician Bill James in *Moneyball*.

I hope that surprised you. I was gobsmacked when I read that.

Lovely. But what's that got to do with Rob Lewis's 25th place finish in the Provincial High School golf tournament you ask?

The answer lies in the rough architecture surrounding the batter's box and the golfing tee, and the onerous rebuff of nuance, confidence and happenstance.

Fifty points on a batter's average rests on the niggling finality of a gust of wind holding a ball in the air just long enough for a left fielder to gather it in on the lip of his Rawlings.

And for a golfer? Well the difference between a 78 and a 72 may rest with a horrible lie on the 14th hole of the Trillium Wood golf course in Belleville. That's where Lewis found himself last Friday on a cold and windy day in central Ontario playing against some of the best young golfers in Ontario. On 14, between a bulrush and a hard place. For the record I got that story from Rob's dad. And no, 14 wasn't the sole reason Lewis ran up a 78 on that day. It was just a contributor. Like that gust of wind at Yankee Stadium. Subtleties and bad luck. Finicky parts of a finicky game.

Lewis, for his part, is fairly happy with his play. And why not? This is his second run at the OFSAA schoolboy tournament and he's got another year left. The young man who works and plays at Pinestone is only in Grade 11 and he'll have another shot, god willin', at those mesmerizing golfing gods next year.

"I think I played really well but I could have played better," says Lewis. "My goal was top 10 and I think I could have been there. I shot 73 there in the COSSA finals (finishing third) and I think I could have shot 73 there again on both days last week."

Teacher, coach and mentor Paul Longo says he's absolutely delighted with the solid finish. He added that the course set up around 6,400 yards at the COSSA tourney. For the OFSAA? It was a monstrous 6,700 yards.

"The course was playing really tough last week," says Longo. "There were some tough pins and it was wet, so it made it seem longer."

"Going in Rob was very confident and playing really well. Rob tends to put a lot of pressure on himself and I thought top 30 would be a great finish for him. But Robbie was trying to win and he felt confident enough that

he could win. After the first day he was 22nd and he was hoping for a 73 or 74 on Friday but he ended with that 78. Rob hit the ball really well both days, but it was a matter of a few putts.

The top two finishers ripped around the track and posted identical scores of minus eight, leading to a playoff on Friday.

Funny thing says Longo. "They got hot with the putter for two days and that happens. But really, Rob is not far off those two guys."

Right now? Lewis is enjoying the extended run of good weather and still playing a few rounds and hitting balls at the driving range. He plays golf every day all summer long and spends endless hours slugging balls on the driving range. He works at the Pinestone course and is still mentored by local pro Ken Rosenberg.

His short term goals include participation on the Ontario GAO (Golf Association of Ontario) junior circuit in the summer. He'll be looking at accumulating enough points to qualify for the Canadian Junior Championships.

"I'd like to get a scholarship for golf at an American university," says Lewis. "There are a lot of careers in golf. The PGA is the goal for most young golfers."

As it should be.

And that's what's funny about golf and baseball.

An extra hit every two weeks is all that stands between a ballplayer and his goal of 300.

In golf. It's often just a few putts and a screaming eagle standing between top 20 and top 10. For reference? See Tiger Woods.

Rob Lewis

"I'd like to get a scholarship for golf at an American university,"



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Sports news

Hawks Hoopsters' fourth quarter blues

Tigers 24 – Hawks 19.

By Terrance Gavan

Basketball is a game played over four quarters. The first three quarters pose as the opening act. The fourth quarter contains final scene, climax and often? A crushing denouement.

Sometimes that fourth quarter just goes way off script. And when that happens? A single improviser can steal the show.

For three quarters last Wednesday (Oct 19.) the Hal High Hawks girls varsity basketball team trod the much-impacted boards of the old Hawks' Nest Theater with hidebound purpose.

Come the fourth quarter the senior Hawks and Thomas A Stuart Tigers were locked in a low-scoring but exciting hardwood clash.

For the duration of the third quarter the teams swapped leads. 15-16, 17-16, 18-17 and well... you get the idea.

In the fourth quarter the Hawks went down by three and that's when coach Walter Tose took full court pressure to another level. The Hawks play a full zone frontcourt press but stepped up that devastating defense late in the fourth quarter with all five starters picking off a boatload of errant passes in the final quarter.

The Pillsbury Dough Boy doesn't make that many turnovers in a week.

Turnovers are good. Tose will tell you that. Heck, I'll tell you that. But they only influence the outcome of a game if they're converted into points.

And that's not what happened on Wednesday afternoon. The Hawks fabulous press gave them plenty of opportunities to keep the game close, but time and again Hawks shots, lay-ups and rebounding let them down.

Tigers' strong forward Kelsey McGee led all scorers with 14 points and eight of those came during a late fourth quarter surge. Jessica Rider led the Hawks with eight points and Maia O'Sullivan connected for four points.

Tose said that the Hawks' inability to score in transition was key.

"We forced a lot of turnovers and our girls stole a lot of balls, by we just couldn't convert them into points," said Tose.

It's been a frustrating season for the varsity. They haven't won a game yet, but they've been within a cat's blink of the



Hawks Jamie Dack is surrounded by Tigers as she tries to put up cut basketball a shot Senior basketball action on Wednesday afternoon. /Photo Terrance Gavan

win column. We haven't had a great season, but we're at home the final two games of the season and if we beat those two teams by a margins greater than they beat us, well, we'll make the playoffs," said Tose.

Tose and the varsity played LCVI in Lindsay on Thursday and they end their season with two home games next week in the Nest.

Hawks play Fenelon on Tuesday and Brock on Thursday

afternoon.

If they can get their Jehovah on – conversion, conversion, conversion - and stay stingy on D then, who knows?

Boston Celtic forward Kevin Garnett once said, err, shouted: "Anything is possible!"

And quick nudge. If a rugged bruiser and surly iconoclast like KG believes that?

The Hal High senior girls and Walter Tose can too.

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Sports news



Hawks' Junior running back Tom Paul splashes down during football action on Thursday afternoon. /Photo Terrance Gavan

Junior Hawks just short of playoff

By Terrance Gavan

A win last Friday over Holy Cross made this week's final league game against Brock Bulldogs pretty darn important.

Coach Bruce Griffith's juniors started the season at 0-3.

When you're dug in that deep it's just about time to place an emergency call to Dibble's Drilling.

The Hawks skipped that plan and dialed up a little heart instead.

Hal High's young gridiron guys jumped into the Kawartha fray in earnest two weeks ago with a 40-0 win over IE Weldon and last Friday (Oct 14) they popped to a 29-18 win over Holy Cross.

That was our best game of the season, said Griffith.

On Thursday afternoon the Hawks did everything but beat Brock Bulldogs. The two teams were tied 8-8 at the half.

Brock took a 21-8 lead in the second half, and that forced the Hawks to play a little catch up, a tough task when you're going up against a big and talented team like Brock

Bulldogs. We moved the ball well, but they took away our outside sweep to Connor Bird and that's been our bread and butter all season, said Griffith.

But fair dues, when that option was taken away the Hawks turned to big Cooper Sherlock, who centered the wishbone and literally carried the Hawks and a few gnarly Bulldogs - down the field on numerous occasions.

Sherlock, Bird, Tommy Paul and quarterback Tyler Johnson-Perrin all combined to bring the ball back down the field and with less than two minutes remaining they capped off a drive on a quarterback sneak notching Johnson-Perrin's first TD of the season.

It could not have come at a better time. The Hawks kicked away, eschewing the short kick and the defence came up big forcing Brock into a third and eight.

That's when Brock decided - with 24 seconds remaining - to give up a two point safety and the ball making the score 21-16 with about 12 seconds left on the clock.

Red Hawks ran on one play and then Tyler Johnson-Perrin whose dad played QB for the Hawks back in the day and

launched the proverbial Hail Gabriel (Mary can't catch) to a streaking Tommy Paul.

Paul, the speediest kid on the team, ran by his coverage and under the ball, but had to break stride for just a second to gather it in.

There was literally no one between Paul and the goal line, but in that split second Paul took to hit stride, Brock's defensive back stumbled back into Paul with enough zest to knock him off his feet.

Game over.

But no one was disappointed. Including Griffith, who made a point of congratulating each and every one of his 44 players.

Usually we're strong at the start of the season and the other teams catch up to us as the season progresses, said Griffith. Credit to Brock, they've got a great team there, but I think we had a shot at winning that game today.

The seniors season ended in a loss stretching their record to 0-6 on the season.

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Sports news

Cherry is the pits

The Drape lashes out at bunch of pukes and hypocrites

By Terrance Gavan

The Grapes are always sour on HNIC, unless Don Duplicitous is talking about Canada's troops.

Last week Don Cherry said some very nasty things on the mothership's ode to anachronism: Hockey Night in Canada (HNIC).

Cherry said that several latter day enforcers and, ahem, bosom friends – are hypocrites.

Cherry took a rip at former NHL players Chris Nilan, Stu Grimson and Jim Thomson wrongly accusing them of attaching fighting in hockey to possible addiction and/or emotional problems later in life.

"The ones that I am really disgusted with," Cherry said on 'Coaches Coroner' last Thursday, "... are the bunch of pukes that fought before: Stu Grimson, Chris Nilan and Jim Thomson. (They say) 'Oh, the reason that they're drinking, (taking) drugs and alcoholics is because they're fighting.' You turncoats. You hypocrites."

He apologized this week - under threat of a law suit from Grimson and Nilan - in a hilariously contrived Punch and Judy routine with his svelte conscience and obsequious puppeteer Ron MacLean nodding like a bobblehead in the background. MacLean is low hanging fruit; and sits like a modern eunuch on Coach's corner to play a pandering Pancho to Cherry's noodle-knackered Don Quixote.

We remain gobsmacked by the CBC, who refuse to acknowledge that Cherry is a talking, walking testament to anachronism. Don Cherry – my uncle Donald Francis Gavan once opined – "is as dumb as a bag of hammers." The Donald has some bona fides. He played occasionally with The Flying Fathers. He was offered a cup of coffee by the Leafs when he was playing hockey for St Mikes – on his way to the seminary.

You know why Cherry gets a pass on most of the idiotic drivel he spills into the ozone don't you?

"Da' trooops!"

Mr. Cherry is just barely smart enough to know that smarmy, soporific, and hyperbolic meanderings featuring Canada's young uniformed men and women will set the hook into the hearts of patriotic Canadians. He is equal to his task. Displaying images of recently deceased Canadian infantrymen and women; when he really should be talking about the game. Thus far the gambit has paid dividends. It's why he gets away with the manic bombast and his support of: "Da fightink! What makes dis' game so great!"

So shame on you Don Cherry. Shame! You smarmy opportunist. You leech. I submit that Cherry is using young Canadian men and women, most of whom probably agree with Knuckles Nilan – because they know about PTSD and the real mental issues that come with fighting - to further his

own interests and keep his six figure salary.

It's wrong. And so is spitting vituperative, uninformed and dumb-as-a-brick venom on a handful of dead NHL enforcers, a great number of recovered alcoholics, another segment of Canadians dealing with prescription drug problems, and guys with real stories to tell. Shame on you Don Cherry.

We have freedom of speech. Thanks to our troops. And we are free to call pipsqueaks on their bovine excrement.

We can also call Mr. Cherry a walking, talking knee-jerk Neanderthal with a barely sputtering noggin. Everyone is in favor of removing head hits from the game. But they want fighting – numerous hits to the head that cause concussions and end careers – to stay. It's called cognitive dissonance. It's flawed. It is unreasonable, unarguable, untenable and unfathomable.

But the guy that profits most – Rock em Sock em anyone? – from fighting gets to keep his job on our public broadcaster because he tugs at some hearts. Know what HNIC and the CBC told Canada when they were flooded with complaints? They said Cherry was paid to be "controversial." Period.

It's a free country and Don Cherry - thank god and PE Trudeau - can say whatever the heck he wants. But he's speaking to a group of 7 to 16 year old hockey fans who aren't apprised of the fact that Don Cherry is not the brightest star in Ursus Major. And here's the real rub. Don is talking to kids. Kids pick their cues from mentors and heroes. Heroes like Cherry Bomb.

Let me apply the heads' up to "youse Kids out deah! Deah's a reason why Don Cherry don't speak English dat good."

It's because he was never destined to find a cure for cancer or argue on the incumbent benefits of solar versus wind. He's a bit of a blowhard. He's been excused for women-bashing, jingoistic malaprops, borderline racism and intolerance.

He said some pretty ugly things about struggling alcoholics and drug addicts. Never mind his McCarthyesque drivel on the subject of pinkoes and lefties.

"Pukes and turncoats." Don's words. Next time you hear that bon mot in a playground. You'll know.

That young man is watching 'Coach's Coroner.'

"See? Here's the think about dat' all a youse younk kids out deah!"

"Don don't care if he's teachink youse kids da' right tink..."

Nope. Sadly. Don... just cares about making a buck.

Ashall takes the helm at curling club



Haliburton Curling Club outgoing president Bruce Martin, left welcomes new president Rick Ashall

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